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22. NEW RECORDS OF TWO EEL FISHES FROM GREAT NICOBAR ISLAND, BAY OF BENGAL¹

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Highly diversified fishes occurring in the coastal waters and coral reef areas of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands have been a source of continuous biodiversity research by various ichthyologists (Rao *et al.* 2000). During the present study, detailed investigations on the fish samples collected from the coral reef areas around the Great Nicobar Island were made. A total of 176 species of fin fishes belonging to 106 genera, 71 families and 15 orders were recorded. Among these, two species are new distributional records to Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Bay of Bengal. The descriptions of these two fishes belonging to families Muraenidae and Moringuidae, classified under the order Anguilliformes, are given here.

Systematic Account

Order: **Anguilliformes**

Family: **Muraenidae**

1. Ribbon Eel *Rhinomuraena quaesita* Garman 1888

Rhinomuraena quaesita Garman 1888. Bull. Essex. Inst. Pp. 114.

Rhinomuraena quaesita: 1990. Randall *et al.* Fishes of the Great Barrier Reef and Coral Sea. Pp. 41.

Material examined: One specimen, 20.i.2003, Lashman beach, east coast of Great Nicobar Island, Reg. No. 5167(A).

Description (mm): Total length 755, eye diameter 4, distance from snout to dorsal 30, body depth 15, caudal fin length 4, length of dorsal fin 725, ventral 510. Body slender and elongated; cleft of mouth reaching far behind eye; triserial villiform teeth in both the jaws; tip of jaws with barbel-like

filamentous appendages; tube of anterior nostril with foliaceous appendages; dorsal and anal fins well developed, origin of dorsal fin well before gill openings; pectoral fins absent; dorsal, anal and caudal fins confluent. Body bluish black with yellow dorsal fin, anal fin black; both dorsal and anal fins with white margin.

Habitat: Found in sandy beach areas.

Distribution: Central and western Pacific to Islands of Indian Ocean.

Family: **Moringuidae**

2. Black-tailed Thrush Eel *Moringua bicolor* Kaup 1856

Moringua bicolor Kaup 1856, Cat. Apod. Fish. Pp. 107.

Rataboura bicolor: Munro 1982. The Marine and Freshwater Fishes of Ceylon. Pp. 63.

Material examined: One specimen, 16.ii.2003, Kichad Nullah, west coast of Great Nicobar Island, Reg. No. 5168(B).

Description (mm): Total length 685; eye diameter 3; distance from snout to dorsal 630; depth of the body 14; length of pectoral fin 6; caudal 5; dorsal 55; ventral 50; 5 conical and short teeth arranged in single rows in jaws. Body elongate, worm-like and cylindrical; posterior nostril opens in a pore in front of eye; eyes small and covered with skin; lower jaw projecting a little in front of snout; lateral line present; dorsal and anal fins small, confined to tail region; caudal region forming a point with which dorsal and anal fins are confluent with caudal fin. Upper half of body brownish and lower half pale yellow, caudal fin blackish with a white edge, other fins light yellow.

Habitat: Found around sea grass beds and reef areas
Distribution: India (Great Nicobar Island), Sri Lanka and North Pacific, Japan, Laccadive Sea, Indonesia and Philippines.

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23. *BALITORA BRUCEI* (GRAY) AND *GLYPTOTHORAX TELCHITTA* (HAMILTON), TWO NEW REPORTS FOR ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA¹

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Weekly samplings of fish fauna were initiated from three stations near the Police Colony (27°04.697' N and 93°35.809' E) Itanagar, Papum Pare district, Arunachal Pradesh, since September 2004. A total of 45 species of fishes and two crustaceans were captured, using a cast net of 2.01 m diameter and mesh size of 7 sq. mm. Among the fishes caught till February 27, 2005, individuals of *Balitora brucei* appeared regularly in the catches from September, 2004 to end February, 2005. Although *B. brucei* specimens were captured regularly during this period their numbers were always found to be very low, with one or two individuals appearing in each catch except for February 27, 2005 when the number increased to four individuals. However, no specimens of *B. brucei* have appeared in the catch since. Samples of *B. brucei*, preserved in 10% formalin, are deposited in G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development (GBPIHED), N.E. Unit (Collection No. GBP-NE/FF/18, dated 14/09/04).

During the sampling on December 7, 2004, a single individual of *Glyptothorax telchitta* was caught with specimens of *Garra gotyla gotyla*, *Garra amandalei*, *Psilorhynchus balitora*, and *Barilius bendelisis*. This specimen has been preserved and deposited in the Unit's collection (Collection No. GBP-NE/FF/37, dated 07/12/04).

B. brucei were found mostly attached to the boulders in fast moving waters, especially on stones covered with fine

algae. *G. telchitta* was found predominantly in the medium current water with slippery stones in river bed and big boulders surrounded.

Balitora brucei have been reported from different parts of India (Talwar and Jhingran 1991; Menon 1999), as well as Bangladesh (Talwar and Jhingran 1991; Kottelat 1998), Bhutan (Talwar and Jhingran 1991; Kottelat 1998) and Nepal (Shrestha 1990; Shrestha 1999). The species have been reported from the Indian states of Assam, Meghalaya and northern West Bengal (Kottelat 1988; Menon 1999; Kapoor *et al.* 2002).

In India, *Glyptothorax telchitta* has been reported from Manipur (Talwar and Jhingran 1991), Mizoram (Kar *et al.* 2000). The species is also reported from the north-eastern states of Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura (Sen 2000) It is also known from the Vindhya range of mountains, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, where it is common (Talwar and Jhingran 1991). There appears to be no report of either species from Arunachal Pradesh and hence, this is the first report for both *Balitora brucei* and *Glyptothorax telchitta* from the state.

1. *Balitora brucei* (Gray) (Fig.1)

1 ex., Weight 4.80 gm, Total length 78.77 mm, Standard length 68.52 mm, Head length 14.46 mm, Head width 13.09 mm, Head depth 4.48 mm, Body depth 9.47 mm, eye diameter 1.33 mm, Interorbital distance 6.21 mm, Nasal distance